AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A pretensioner for increasing the restraint force of a seat belt on an occupant comprising:

a connecting member connected to a piston, the piston being configured to be moved by pressure of gas generated by a gas generator,

a bent tubular member <u>having an approximately constant inner diameter and</u> comprising a linear <u>sliding</u> portion in which the piston is slidably fitted and a gas-generator accommodating portion in which said gas generator is accommodated; and

wherein the connecting member is operatively connected to the seat belt so that when the piston moves the connecting member pulls the seat belt.

- 2. (Currently Amended) The pretensioner of claim 1, wherein the <u>tubular member includes a</u> <u>bend so that an angle between the direction in which the gas-generator accommodating</u> portion <u>extends and the direction in which the linear portion extends is acute is acutely bent</u> with respect to said piston sliding portion so as to extend toward said piston sliding portion.
- 3. (Currently Amended) The pretensioner of claim 1, wherein the <u>tubular member includes</u> an obtuse bend so that the gas-generator accommodating portion <u>extends away from the is</u> obtusely bent with respect to said piston sliding portion so as to extend toward the side opposite from said piston sliding linear portion.
- 4. (Currently Amended) The pretensioner of claim 1, wherein the <u>tubular member includes a</u> <u>bend so that the gas-generator accommodating portion extends in a direction generally perpendicular is bent at right angles to said sliding linear portion.</u>
- 5. (Currently Amended) The pretensioner of claim 1, wherein the gas-generator accommodating portion extends <u>away from and</u> in parallel with said <u>piston sliding linear</u> portion and toward the side opposite from said piston sliding portion so as not to be coaxial with said <u>piston sliding linear</u> portion.



- 6. (Currently Amended) The pretensioner of claim 1, wherein the gas-generator accommodating portion or extends in parallel with said piston sliding linear portion and toward said piston sliding linear portion.
- 7. (Original) The pretensioner of claim 1, wherein the tubular member includes a hole bored coaxially with said piston, the connecting member being positioned to pass through the hole.



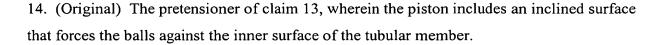
- 8. (Original) The pretensioner of claim 1, wherein the connecting member is connected to a seat belt buckle.
- 9. (Currently Amended) The pretensioner of claim 1, wherein movement of the piston within the linear sliding portion is limited to a single direction.
- 10. (Currently Amended) A pretensioner for increasing the restraining force of a seat belt on an occupant comprising:
 - a tubular member;
 - a piston slidably positioned within the tubular member;

wherein the piston is connected to a wire operatively connected to the seat belt so that when the piston is moves due to gas pressure generated by a gas generator, the seat belt is pulled to thereby increase the restraining force on the occupant;

wherein the gas generator is accommodated within the tubular member; and wherein the tubular member <u>includes a bend</u> is bent so that the gas generator is located offset from the axis of movement of the piston.

- 11. (Original) The pretensioner of claim 10, wherein the tubular member includes a hole through which the wire passes, the hole being located between the piston and the gas generator.
- 12. (Original) The pretensioner of claim 10, wherein movement of the piston is limited to a single direction.

13. (Original) The pretensioner of claim 12, wherein the piston includes a plurality of balls that are forced against an inner surface of the tubular member when the piston is forced in a direction opposite to the single direction.



15. (New) The pretensioner of claim 10, wherein an angle between a line extending parallel to a portion of the tubular member accommodating the gas generator and a line extending along the axis of movement of the piston is acute.

